

Message Text

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54

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 NSC-05 SAJ-01 CIAE-00 PM-04 INR-07 L-03

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FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4826

SECDEF

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

INFO CINCLANT

USLOSACLANT

USCINCEUR

USNMR SHAPE

C O N F I D E N T I A L L O N D O N 1 3 3 4 1

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MPOL, NATO, UK

SUBJ: UK DEFENSE CUTS

REF: (A) STATE 209253; (B) STATE 199382; (C) USNATO 4590

(D) LONDON 12768

1. WE ENDORSE COURSE SUGGESTED REFTELS A, B AND C.

2. AS LABOR PARTY MOVES TOWARD BLACKPOOL FOR PARTY CONFERENCE, THE MATTER OF DEFENSE SPENDING WILL BE AN IMPORTANT TARGET FOR ATTACK BY THE LEFTWING. THE ISSUE COMES AT A DIFFICULT AND SENSITIVE STAGE IN GOVERNMENT'S CONTINUING BATTLE TO DEAL WITH UNEMPLOYMENT AND INFLATION. MASON HIMSELF HAS CONSISTENTLY EMPHASIZED WITHIN LABOR PARTY CIRCLES HIS PERSONAL CONCERN THAT ALLIANCE CANNOT AFFORD A BUDGETARY UNRAVELLING PROCESS. HE IS KEENLY AWARE OF DANGER THAT BRITAIN'S DEFENSE CUTS COULD IMPACT TO STIMULATE FURTHER THE UNRAVELLING PROCESS. MASON ALSO IS CONCERNED THAT FAILURE BY BRITAIN TO ACHIEVE SOUGHT- FOR ECONOMIC RESULTS FROM ALREADY ANNOUNCED PUBLIC EXPEN-
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DITURE CUTS WOULD MAKE TASK OF KEEPING BRITAIN'S DEFENSE

EFFORT ON PRESENT COURSE, AND AT PRESENT LEVELS OF
EXPENDITURE, SIGNIFICANTLY MORE DIFFICULT.

ARMSTRONG

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NNN

Message Attributes

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